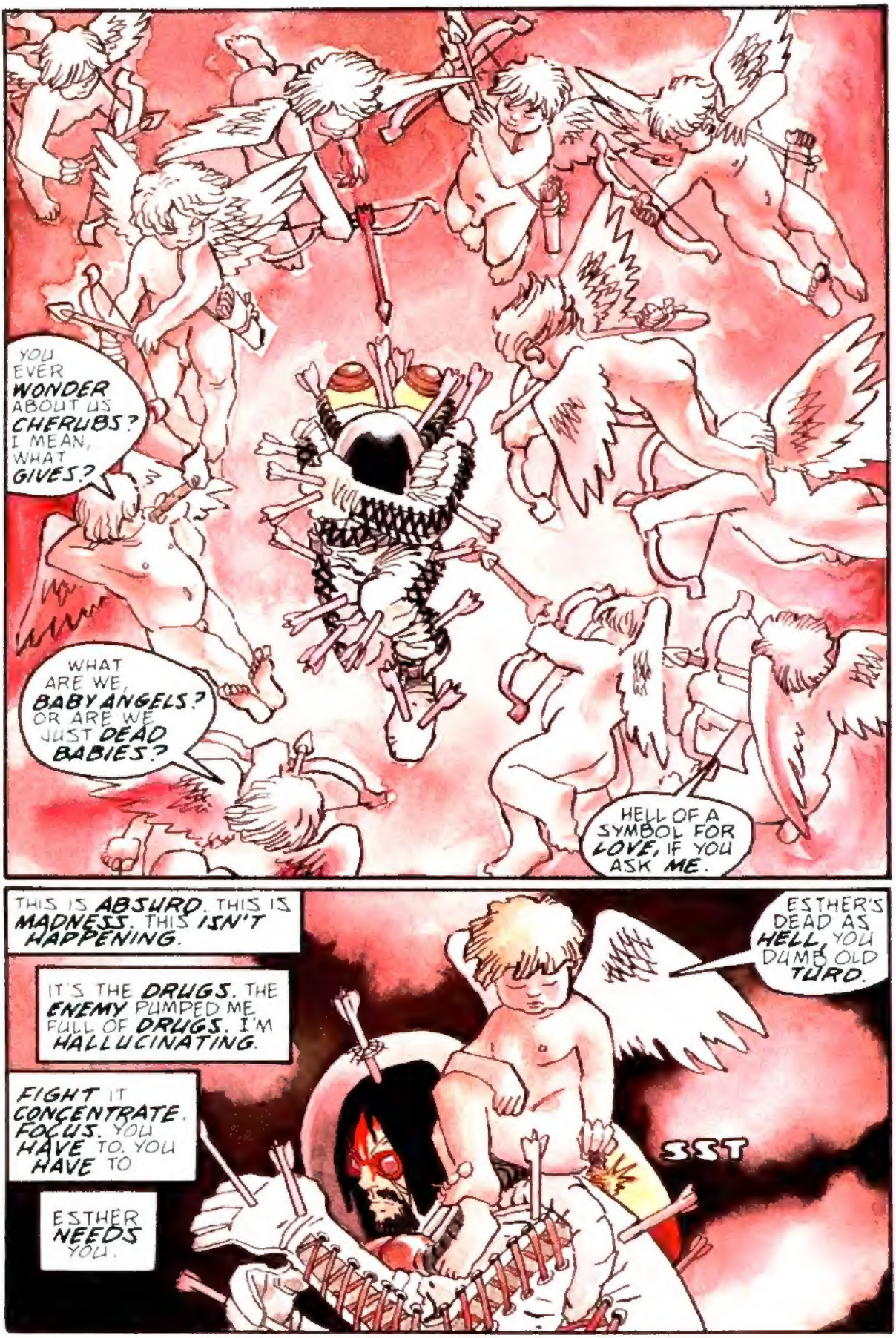
DARK HORSE
MAVERICK
7 of 9
frank MIL
HELL
and BACK
A SIN CITY love story
FACE IT, BIG FELLA-- YOU'RE SCREWED.
SHUT UP!

frank **MILLER** *story & art*
lynn **VARLEY** *color*
diana **SCHUTZ** *editor*
cary **GRAZZINI** *designer*
mike **RICHARDSON** *publisher*

EEE
THIS IS RIDICULOUS.
THIS IS INSANE.
EEE
THIS ISN'T HAPPENING.
BOOM!

WHOOF!
AAARR
THUNK THUNK THUNK
YOU ARE SO SCREWED.
YEESH. WHAT A LOSER.
YOU BROUGHT THIS ON YOURSELF, YOU STUPID DICK.
THIS IS NONSENSE. THIS IS CRAZY.
THIS ISN'T HAPPENING.
COME ON, FELLAS! THIS GUY'S A TOTAL ASSHOLE!


YOU EVER WONDER ABOUT US CHERUBS? I MEAN, WHAT GIVES?
WHAT ARE WE, BABY ANGELS? OR ARE WE JUST DEAD BABIES?
HELL OF A SYMBOL FOR LOVE, IF YOU ASK ME.
THIS IS ABSURD. THIS IS MADNESS. THIS ISN'T HAPPENING.
IT'S THE DRUGS. THE ENEMY PUMPED ME FULL OF DRUGS. I'M HALLUCINATING.
FIGHT IT CONCENTRATE. FOCUS. YOU HAVE TO. YOU HAVE TO
ESTHER NEEDS YOU.
ESTHER'S DEAD AS HELL, YOU DUMB OLD TURO.
SST

DON'T LISTEN. FOCUS. CONCENTRATE. RELAX.
YOU CAN DO IT.
YOU THINK YOU CAN MEDITATE YOUR WAY OUT OF THIS? RIGHT. SURE. TRUST THE GODDAMN FORCE, LUKE
YOU ARE SUCH A PUTZ.
...
FOOLED YOU
RRR

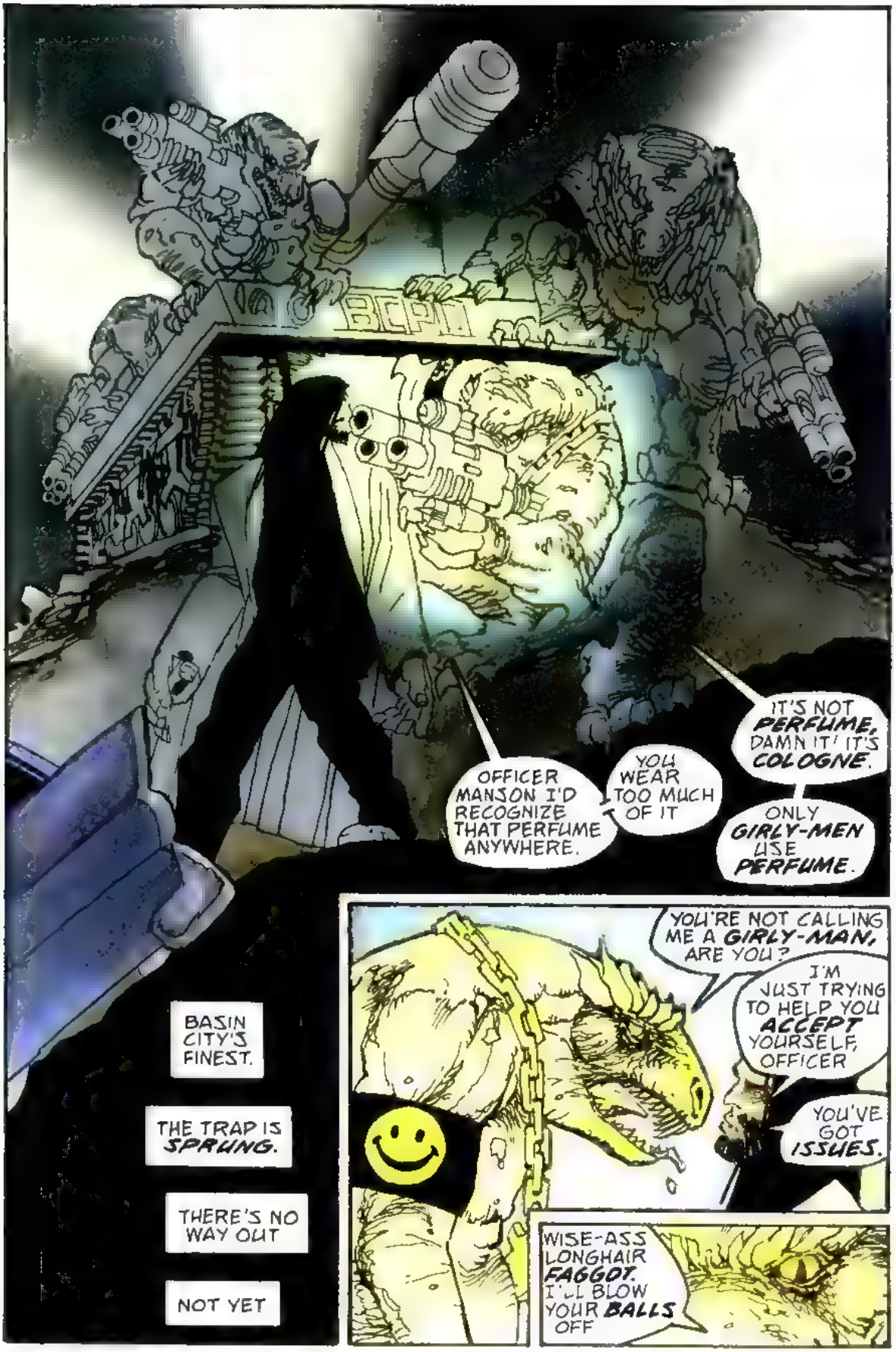
RAARR
YAA
KRUNCH
CHOMP

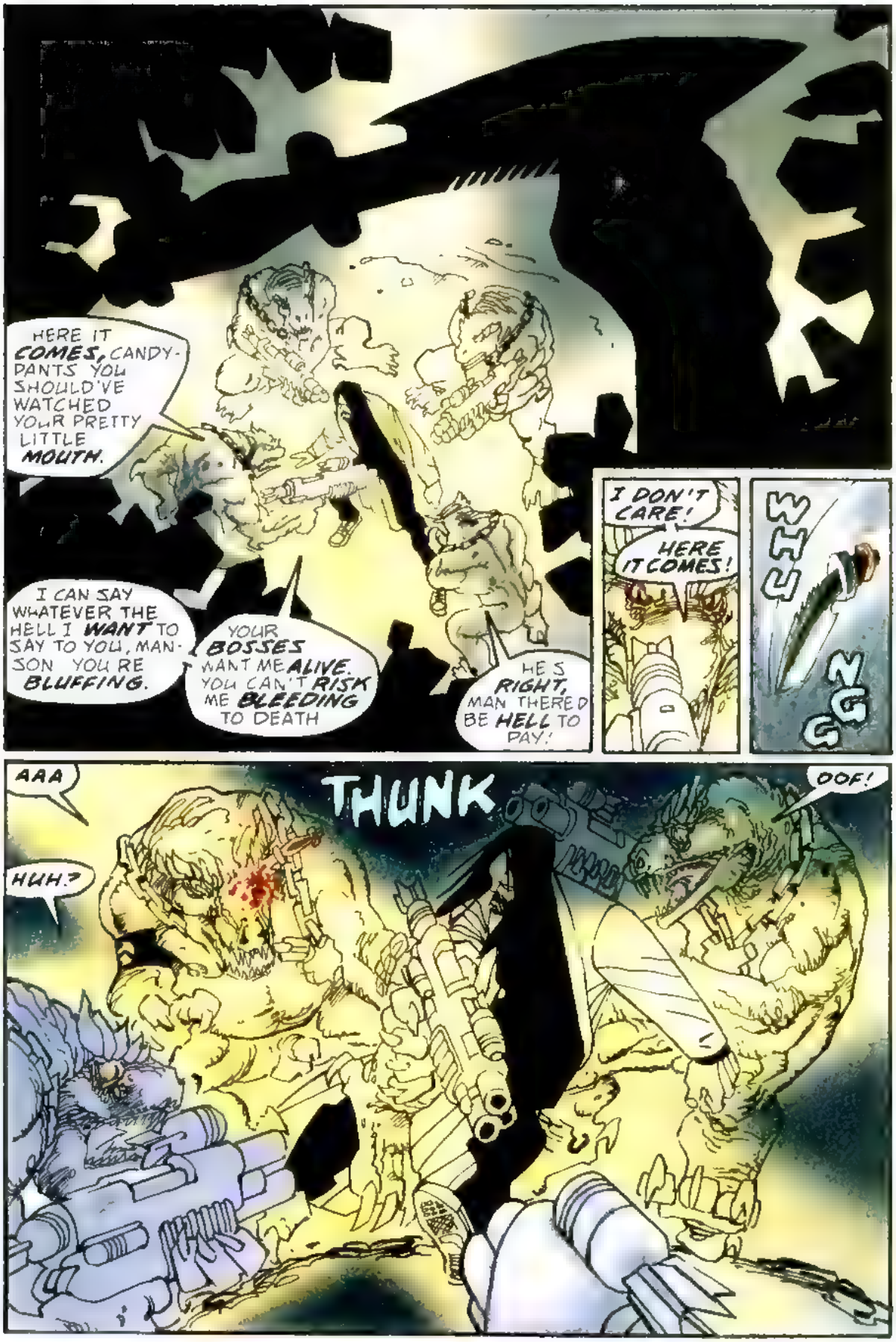
CHOMP
CHOMP
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
GULP
GULP
GULP
TOK
PTOO
TOK
THIS IS IDIOTIC.
THIS IS PLAIN DAMN SILLY.
TOK
CONCENTRATE.
FOCUS.
TOK
RELAX.
TOK TOK TOK

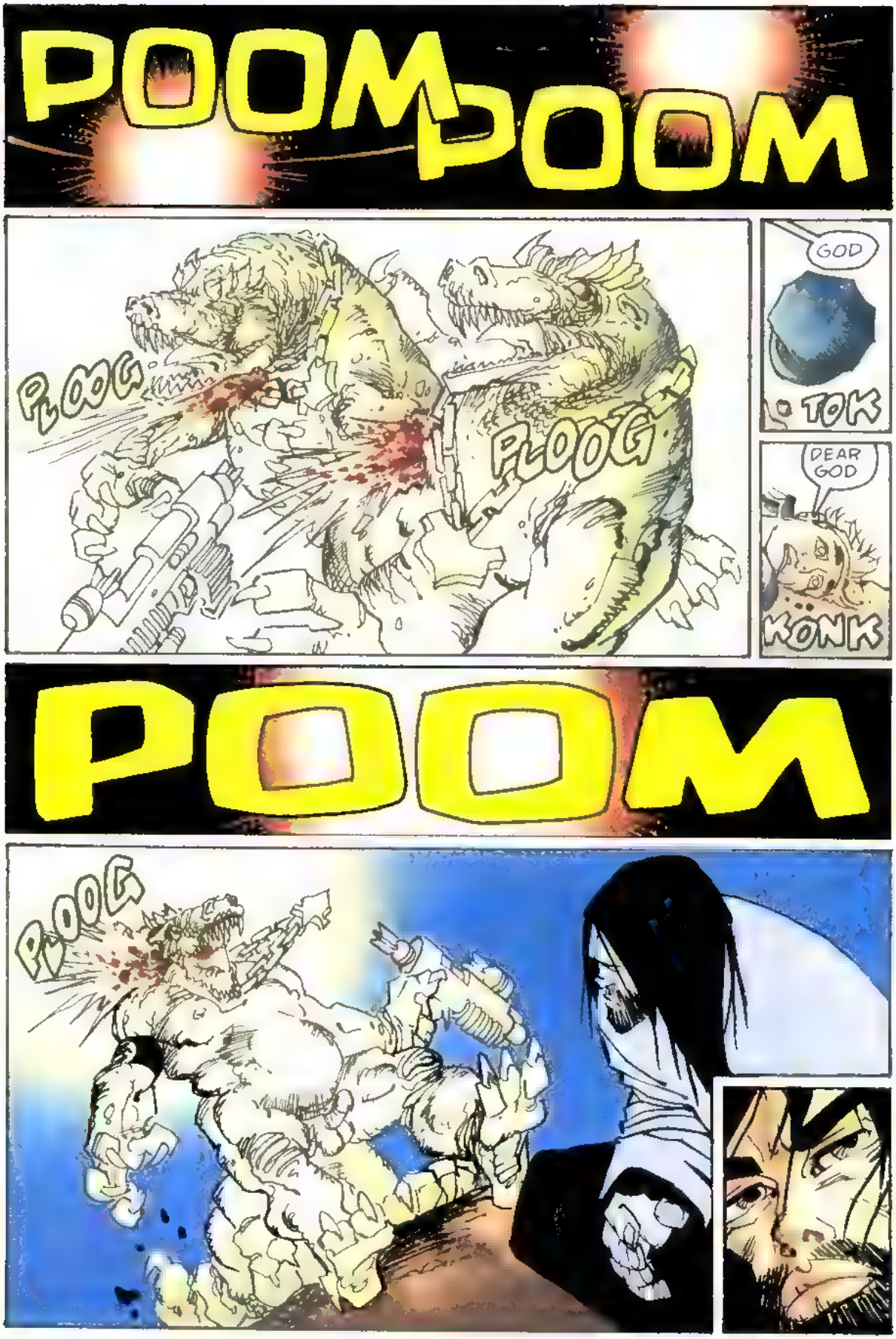
...
...OKAY. THINGS STILL AREN'T QUITE RIGHT--
--BUT THEY'RE BETTER, AREN'T THEY, LOVE?
AT LEAST YOU CAN SEE THE CAR YOU CRASHED IN.

MORE NONSENSE. IGNORE IT.
STAY CALM. DON'T GET RATTLED. DON'T GET DISTRACTED.
PIECE IT ALL TOGETHER. FIGURE IT OUT.
WHAT'S TO FIGURE OUT, SWEETHEART?
IT'S ALL SO SIMPLE.
YOU WERE IN A CAR. IT CRASHED.
YOU'RE ON DRUGS. LOTS OF DRUGS.
AND THAT'S NOT ALL, HONEY
YOU DON'T KNOW WHICH WAY IS UP.
YOU PROBABLY DON'T REMEMBER--
--BUT WE LEFT SOMETHING JUST FOR YOU--
--IN THE TRUNK. TAKE A LOOK.
HE'S NOT LOOKING.
FRAMED
LET'S SHOW HIM, GIRLS!

HUT!
HUT!
HUT!
HUT!
CHECK IT OUT, BABY. THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE.
ACTUALLY, IT WON'T. QUITE THE OPPOSITE.
BUT IT'S A NICE SAYING
THERE SHE IS.
AW POOR LITTLE THING
SHE CAN'T BE MORE THAN EIGHT YEARS OLD.
FAIR TO BREAK YOUR HEART.
JUST THIS ONCE, I'M GRATEFUL FOR THE DRUGS
SCREECH
UH-OH!
WE'D BETTER SCOOT, GIRLS

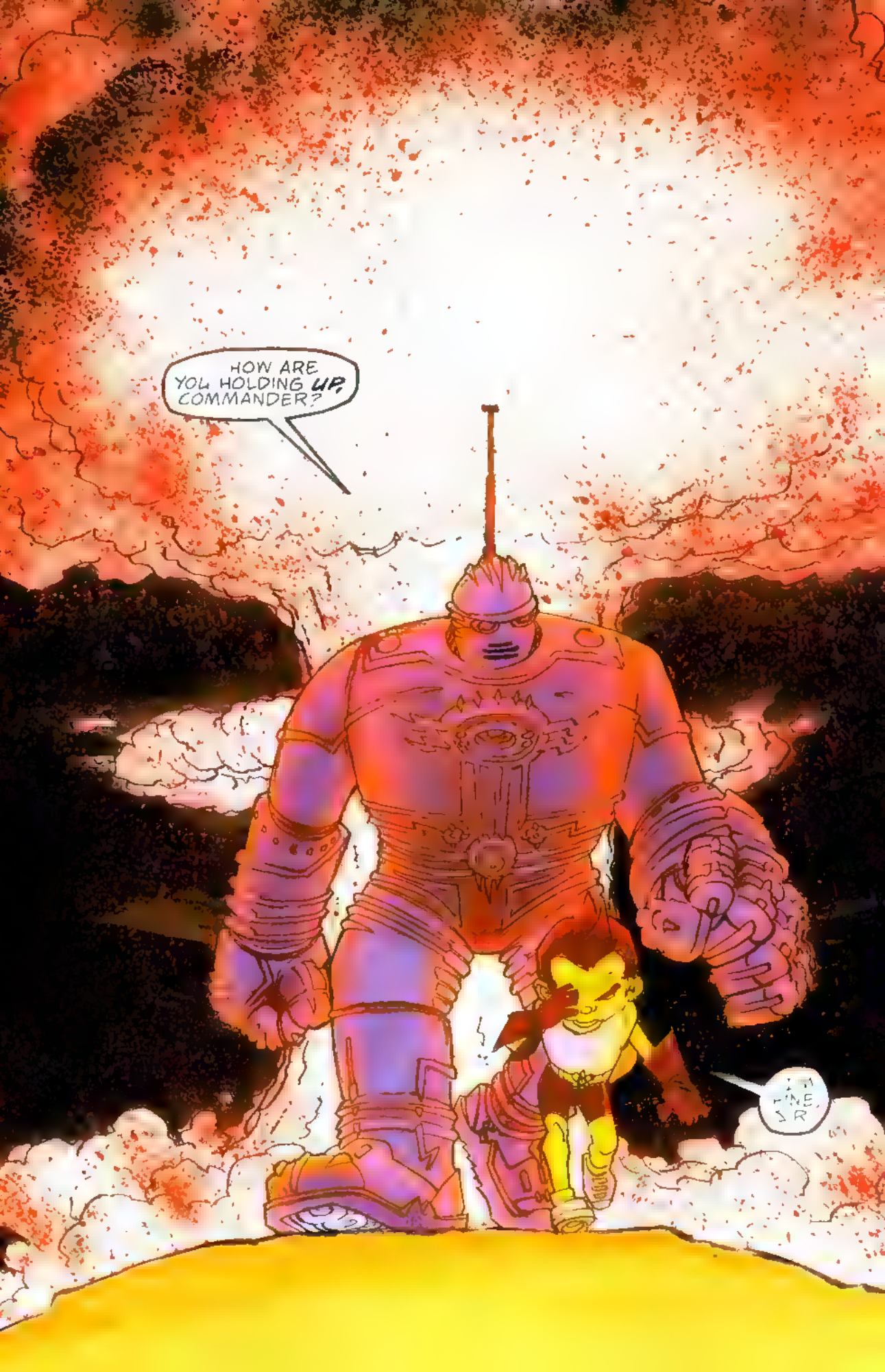

BCPD
OFFICER MANSON I'D RECOGNIZE THAT PERFUME ANYWHERE.
YOU WEAR TOO MUCH OF IT
IT'S NOT PERFUME, DAMN IT! IT'S COLOGNE.
ONLY GIRLY-MEN USE PERFUME.
BASIN CITY'S FINEST.
THE TRAP IS SPRUNG.
THERE'S NO WAY OUT
NOT YET
YOU'RE NOT CALLING ME A GIRLY-MAN, ARE YOU?
I'M JUST TRYING TO HELP YOU ACCEPT YOURSELF, OFFICER
YOU'VE GOT ISSUES.
WISE-ASS LONGHAIR FAGGOT. I'LL BLOW YOUR BALLS OFF

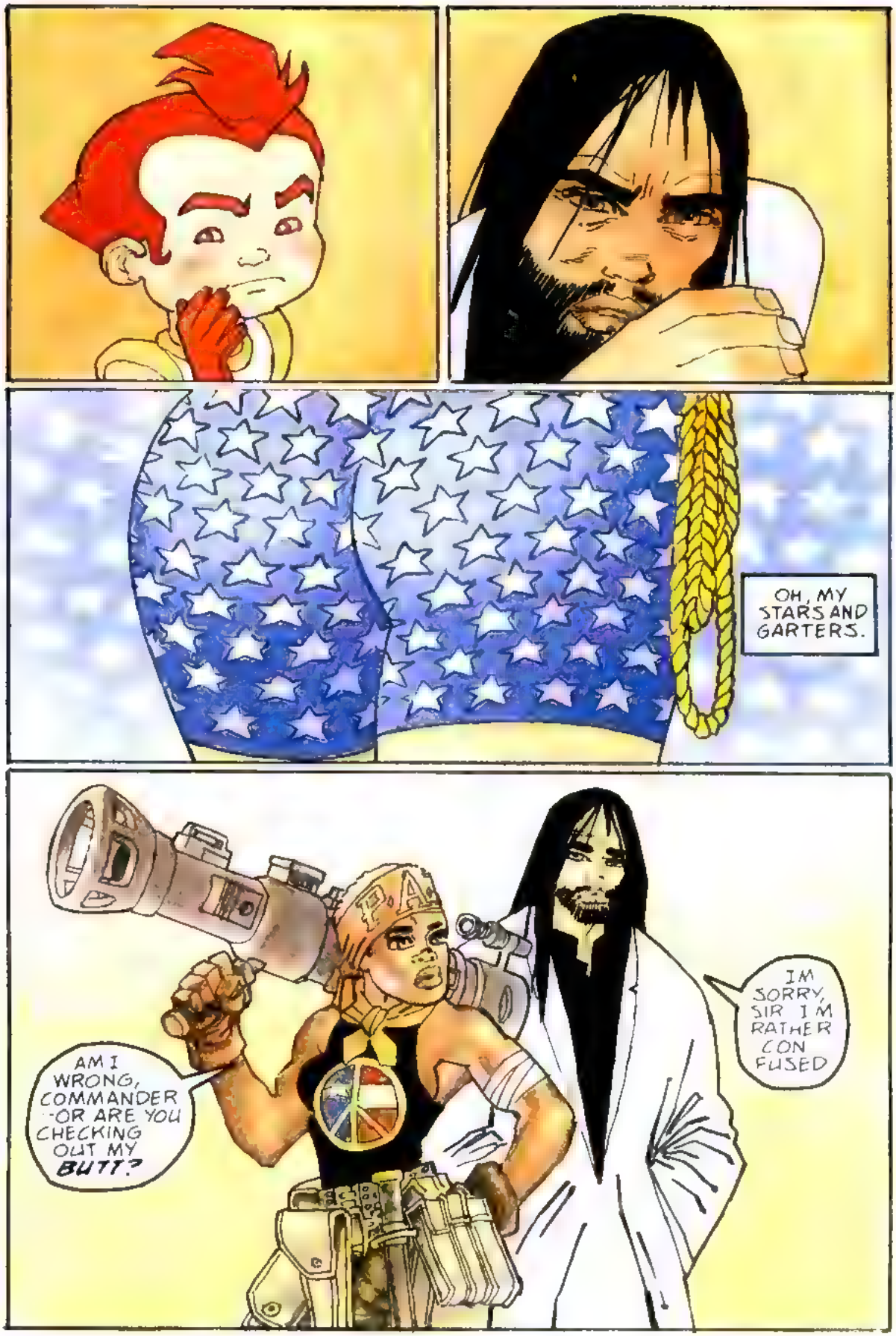

HERE IT COMES, CANDY-PANTS YOU SHOULD'VE WATCHED YOUR PRETTY LITTLE MOUTH.
I CAN SAY WHATEVER THE HELL I WANT TO SAY TO YOU, MANSON YOU'RE BLUFFING.
YOUR BOSSES WANT ME ALIVE. YOU CAN'T RISK ME BLEEDING TO DEATH
HE'S RIGHT, MAN THERE'D BE HELL TO PAY!
I DON'T CARE!
HERE IT COMES!
SHK
GGN
AAA
HUH?
THUNK
OOF!

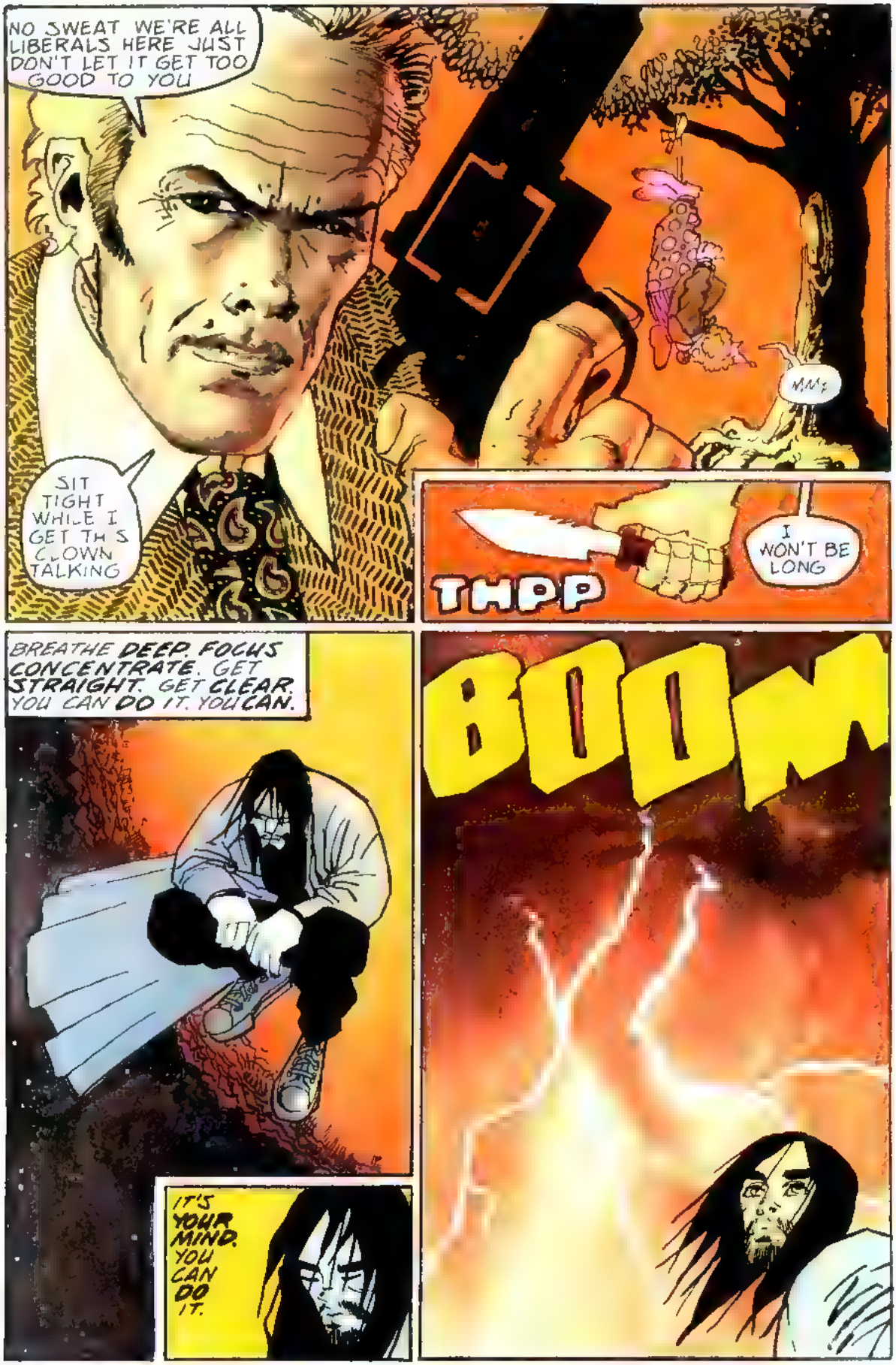

POOM POOM
PLOOG
PLOOG
GOD
TOK
DEAR GOD
KONK
POOM
PLOOG

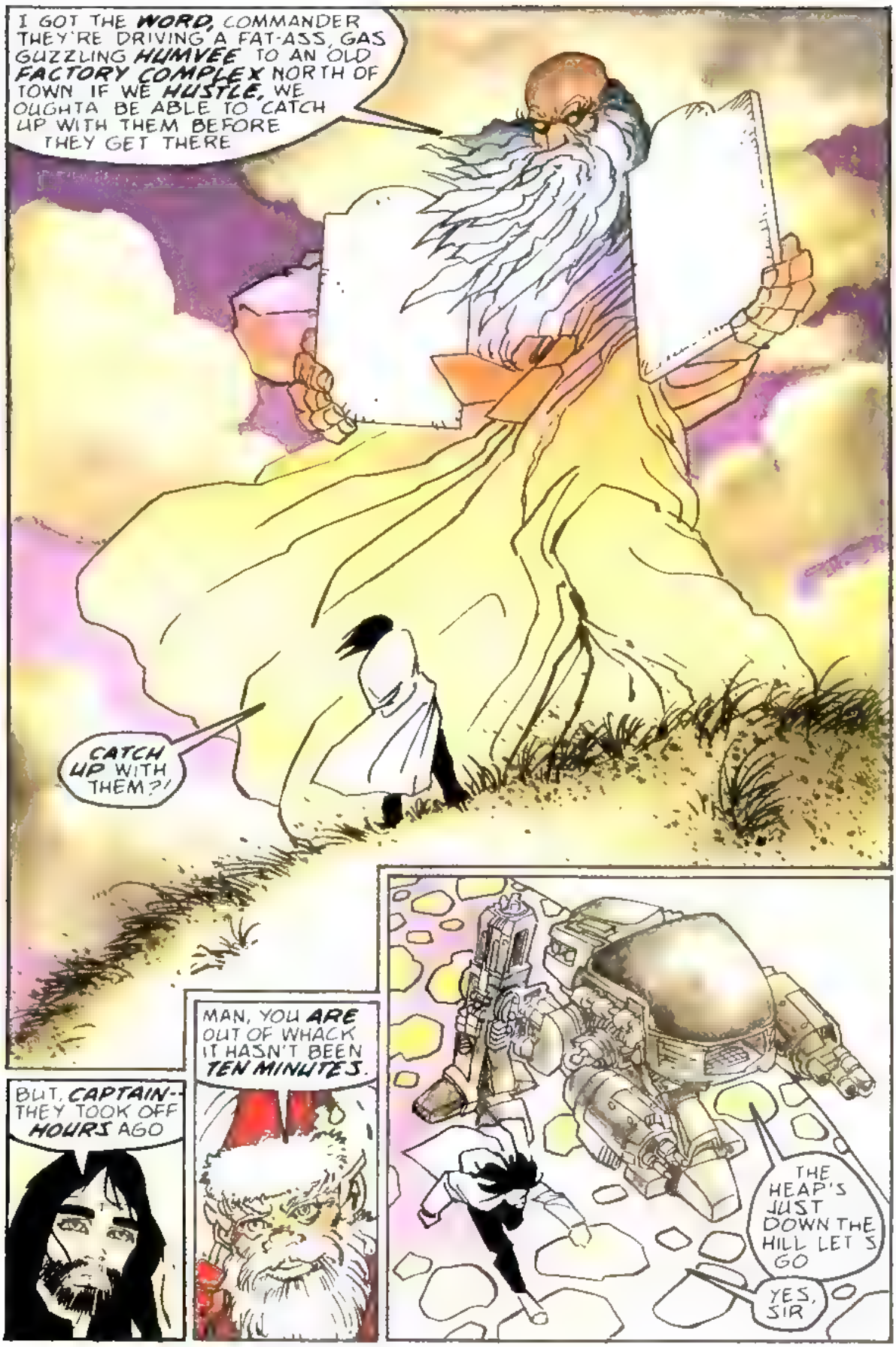
GOT YOURSELF IN DEEP, EH, COMMANDER?
CAPTAIN YOU DON'T KNOW

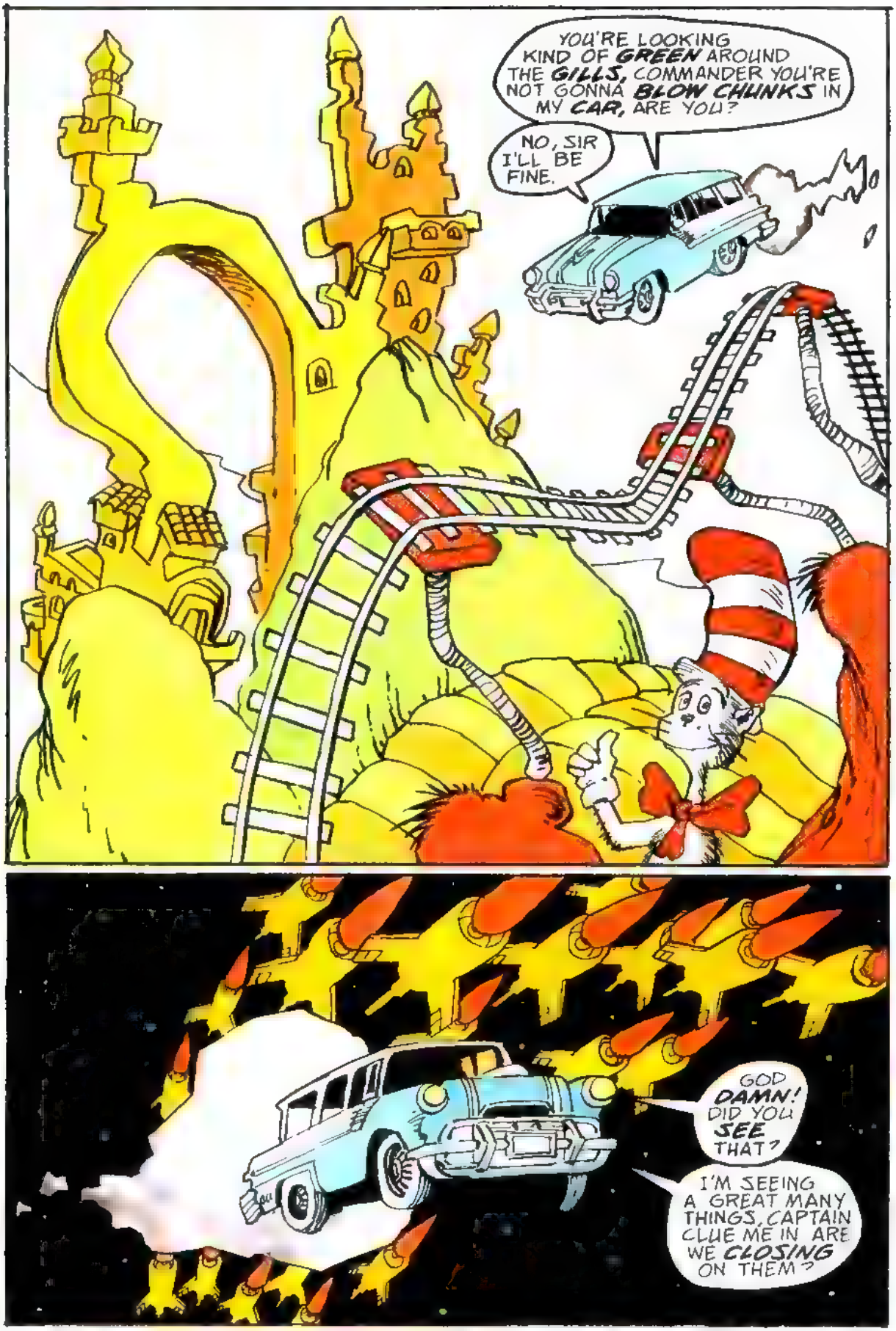
I'D HAVE GOTTEN HERE SOONER, BUT THEY'D ESTABLISHED A PERIMETER. NINE MEN THEY TOOK A WHILE
SO HOW'D YOU MAKE ALL THESE NEW FRIENDS?
A WOMAN WAS KIDNAPPED I'M LOOKING FOR HER. A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO STOP ME
THEY DOPED ME UP I'M HALLUCINATING.
THEN THE FIRST THING WE GOTTA DO IS GET YOU STRAIGHT
THAT MEANS TAKING YOU TO A HOSPITAL AND WASTING TIME ANSWERING A BUNCH OF FOOL QUESTIONS --
OR GETTING OUR HANDS ON WHOEVER FRIED YOUR BRAIN.
I LEFT ONE OF THEIR SNIPERS ALIVE ENOUGH TO POINT US IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. LET'S GO HAVE A CHAT WITH HIM
YES, SIR

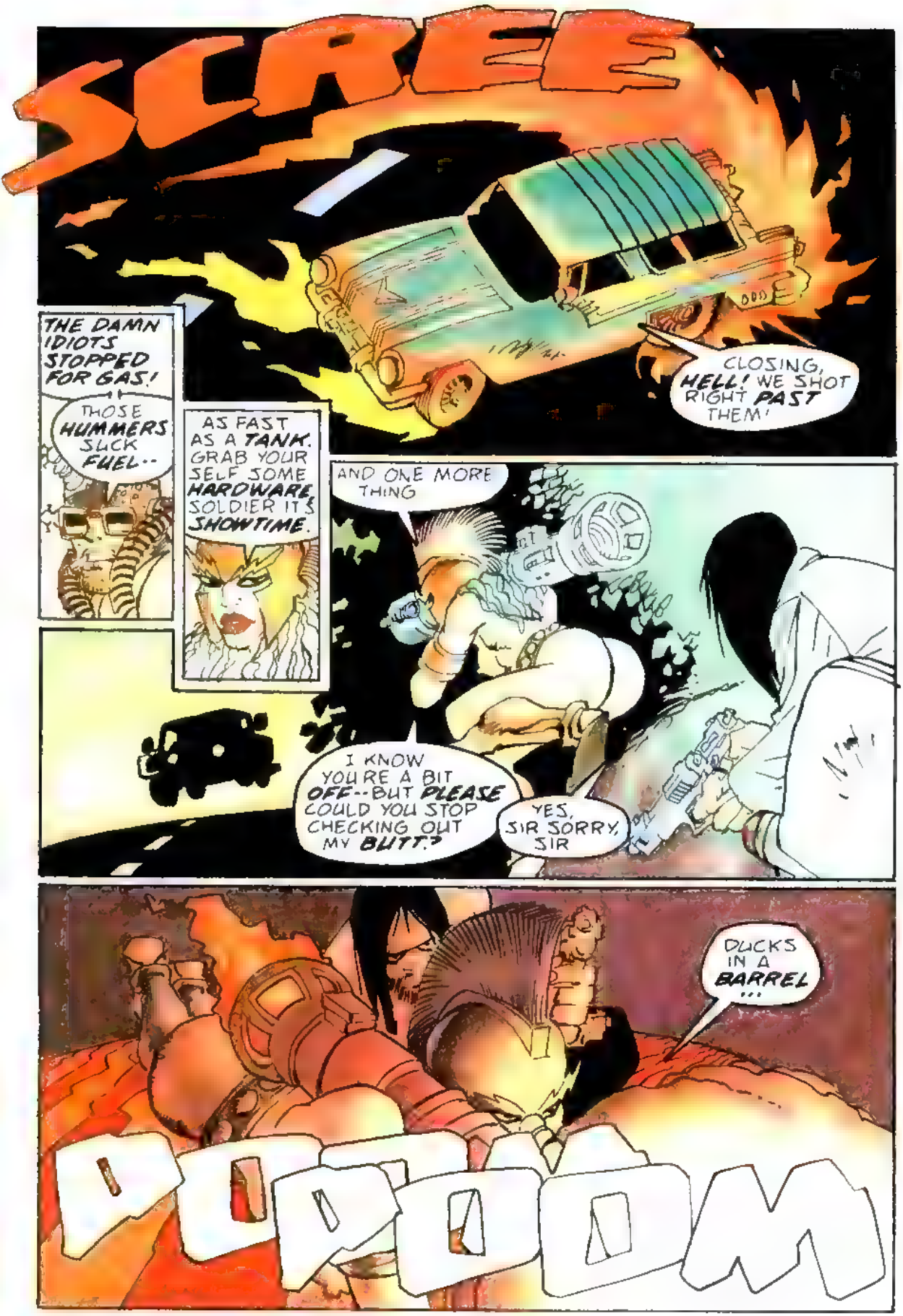

HOW ARE YOU HOLDING UP, COMMANDER?

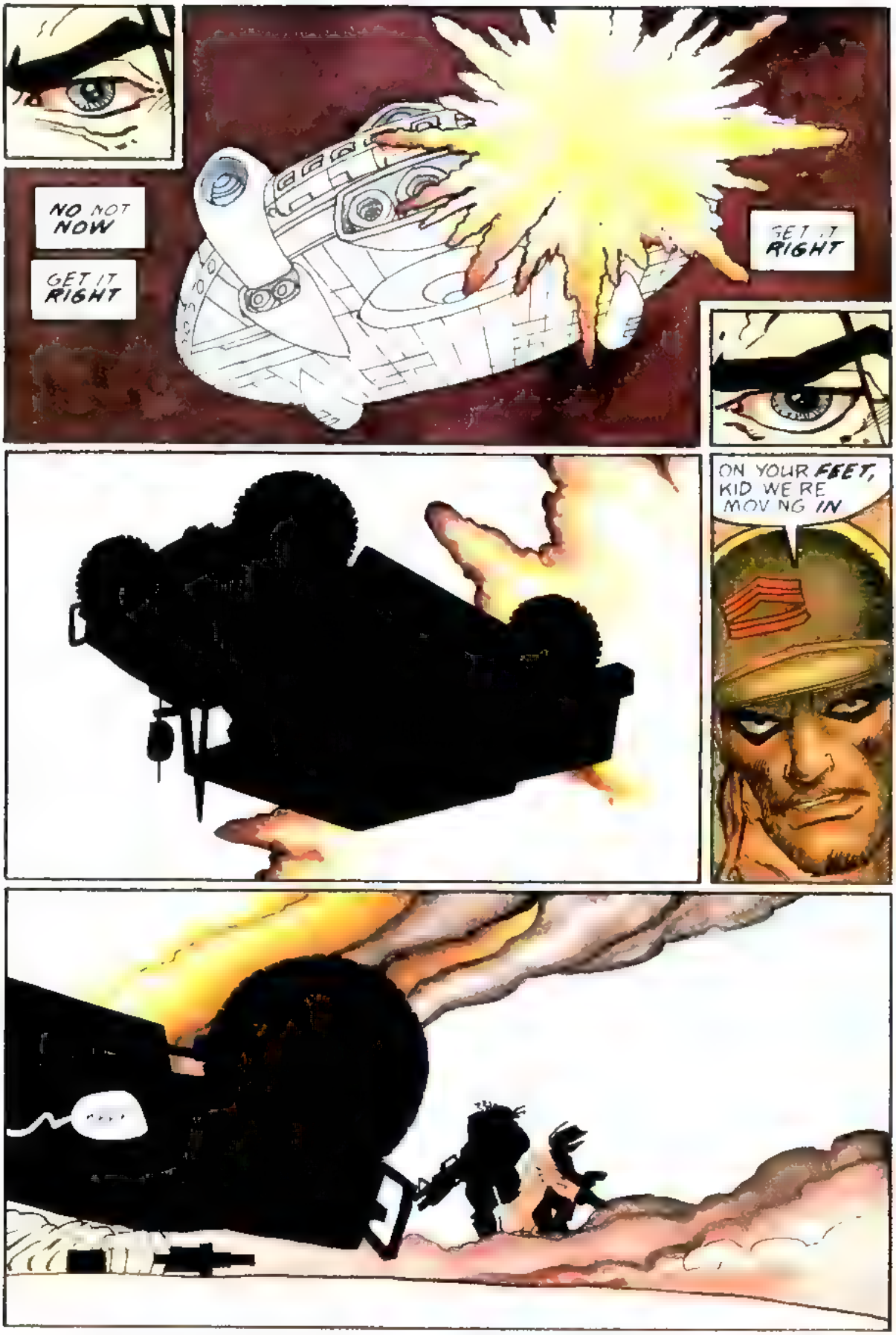

OH, MY STARS AND GARTERS.
AM I WRONG, COMMANDER -OR ARE YOU CHECKING OUT MY BUTT?
IM SORRY, SIR I'M RATHER CON FUSED


NO SWEAT. WE'RE ALL LIBERALS HERE. JUST DON'T LET IT GET TOO GOOD TO YOU
SIT TIGHT WHILE I GET THIS CLOWN TALKING
MM?
THPP
I WON'T BE LONG
BREATHE DEEP. FOCUS CONCENTRATE. GET STRAIGHT. GET CLEAR. YOU CAN DO IT. YOU CAN.
IT'S YOUR MIND. YOU CAN DO IT.
BOOM

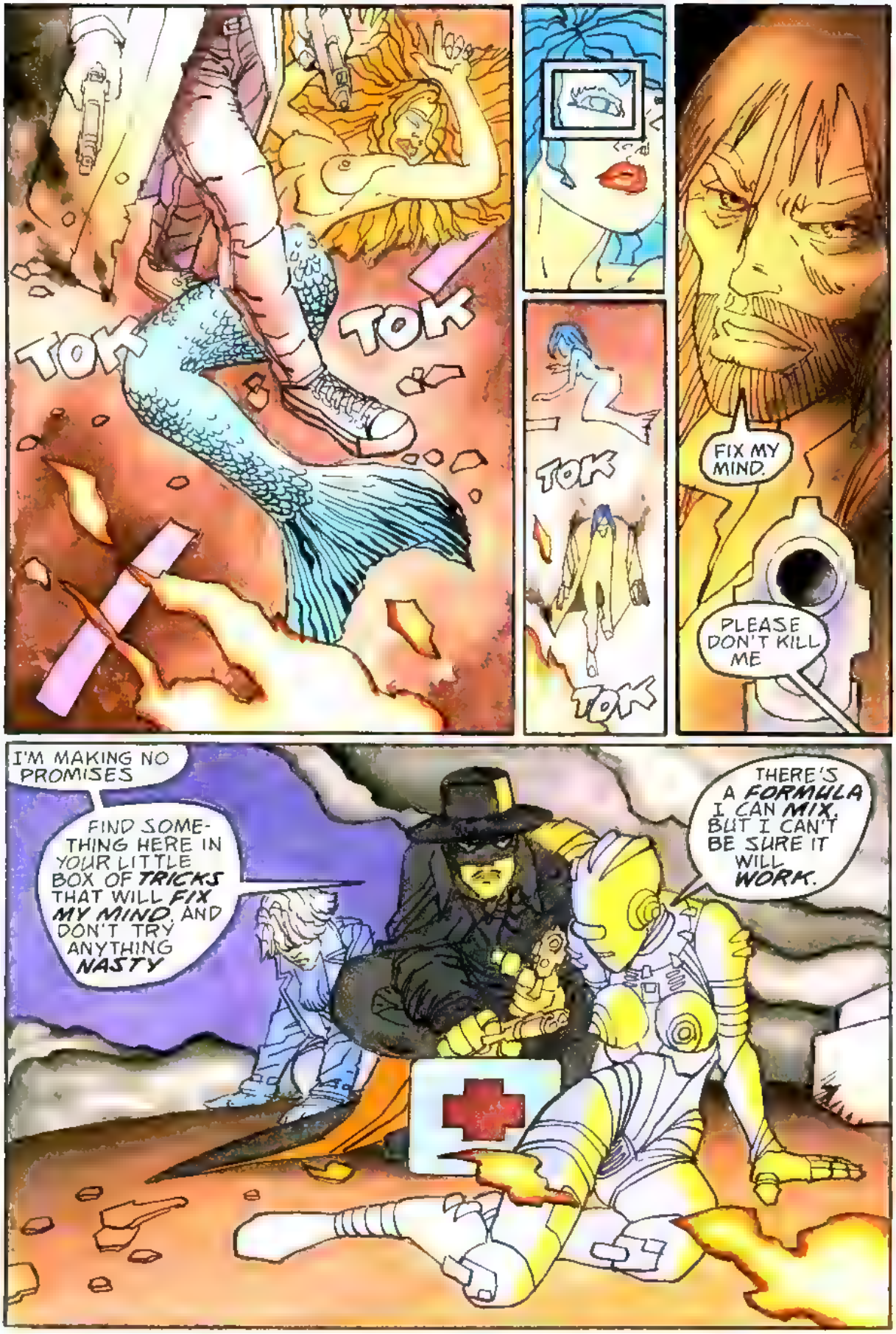

I GOT THE WORD, COMMANDER THEY'RE DRIVING A FAT-ASS, GAS GUZZLING HUMVEE TO AN OLD FACTORY COMPLEX NORTH OF TOWN IF WE HUSTLE, WE OUGHTA BE ABLE TO CATCH UP WITH THEM BEFORE THEY GET THERE
CATCH UP WITH THEM?!
THE HEAP'S JUST DOWN THE HILL LET'S GO
YES, SIR
MAN, YOU ARE OUT OF WHACK IT HASN'T BEEN TEN MINUTES.
BUT, CAPTAIN-- THEY TOOK OFF HOURS AGO


YOU'RE LOOKING KIND OF GREEN AROUND THE GILLS, COMMANDER YOU'RE NOT GONNA BLOW CHUNKS IN MY CAR, ARE YOU?
NO, SIR I'LL BE FINE.
GOD DAMN! DID YOU SEE THAT?
I'M SEEING A GREAT MANY THINGS, CAPTAIN CLUE ME IN ARE WE CLOSING ON THEM?


SCREE
CLOSING, HELL! WE SHOT RIGHT PAST THEM!
THE DAMN IDIOTS STOPPED FOR GAS!
THOSE HUMMERS SUCK FUEL--
AS FAST AS A TANK. GRAB YOUR SELF SOME HARDWARE, SOLDIER IT'S SHOWTIME.
AND ONE MORE THING
I KNOW YOU'RE A BIT OFF--BUT PLEASE COULD YOU STOP CHECKING OUT MY BUTT?
YES, SIR SORRY, SIR
DUCKS IN A BARREL ...
BOOOM


NO NOT NOW
GET IT RIGHT
GET IT RIGHT
ON YOUR FEET, KID WE RE MOV NG IN

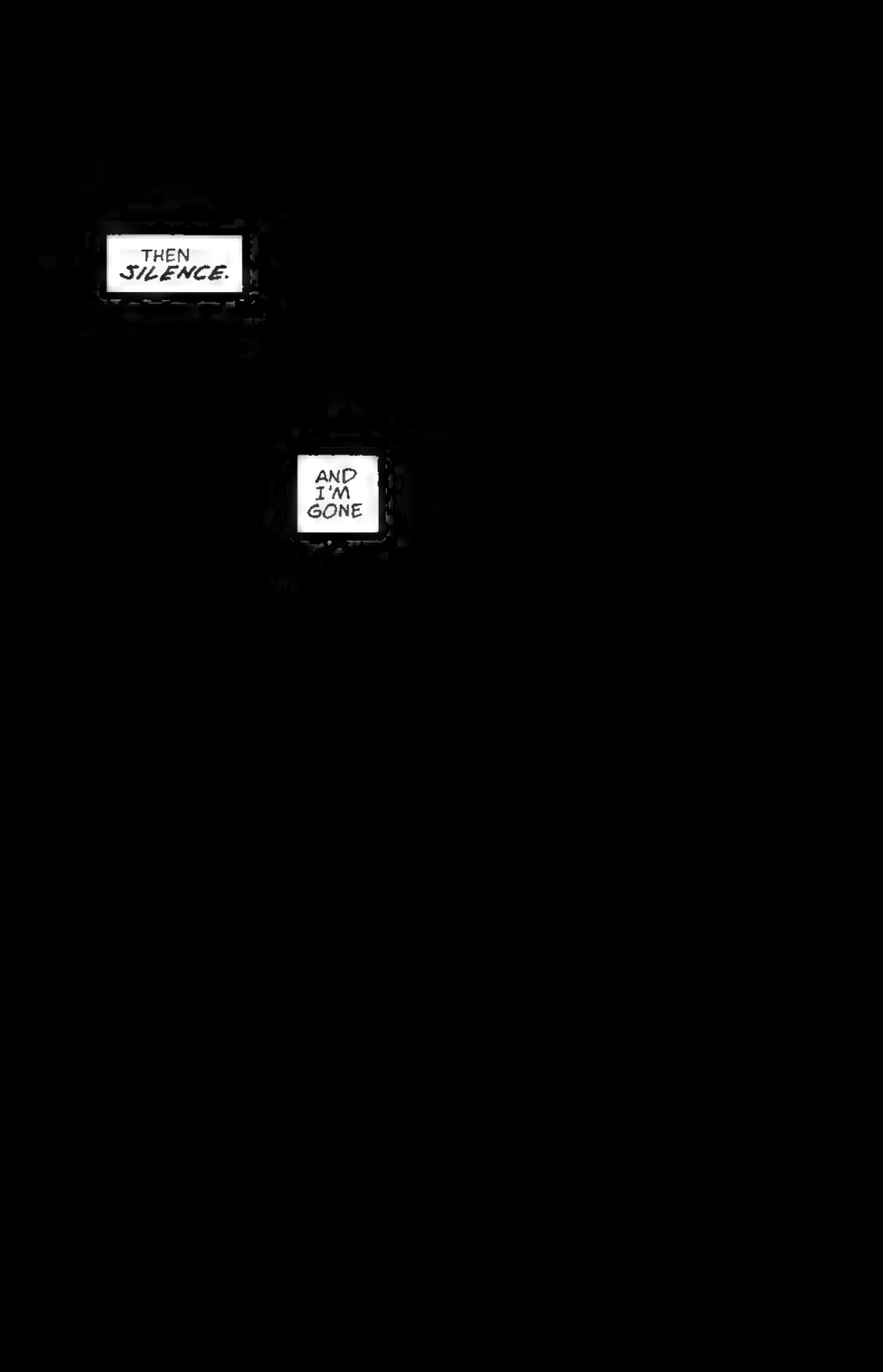
BREKK
GORDO FIRE GUN
GARR
DAMN IT!
I'M HIT!
SO IS HE
BLAM
SPLAK
GORDO DIE NOW
KRUNCH
AEEE
HOLD ON, CAPTAIN YOU HOLD ON
SETTLE DOWN I'VE BEEN SHOT UP WORSE THAN THIS AND YOU'VE GOT A JOB TO FINISH
GIVE 'EM HELL, BOY


TOK
TOK
TOK
TOK
FIX MY MIND.
PLEASE DON'T KILL ME
I'M MAKING NO PROMISES
FIND SOMETHING HERE IN YOUR LITTLE BOX OF TRICKS THAT WILL FIX MY MIND, AND DON'T TRY ANYTHING NASTY
THERE'S A FORMULA I CAN MIX, BUT I CAN'T BE SURE IT WILL WORK.

BE SURE
DROP T, DELIA
IT'S ALMOST SET
I... BE GOOD
HERE WE GO GIVE IT A FEW MOMENTS
YES BOSS
MY STOMACH LURCHES.
BILE CLIMBS MY THROAT
T... TO BLIND
HUKK
PLEASE GIVE T TIME...

TWIN SHOCKS UP MY ARMS.

TWIN
THUNDERCLAPS.


THEN
SILENCE.
AND
I'M
GONE

CONTINUED

And *away* we go . . .

Jason Arnett
Lawrence, KS

Just read *Hell and Back* #4, and I'm amazed, as always. Good to see Delia back, and I really like Wallace. Hope he survives the story to come back again. And as Jamie Creer wrote, I, too, believe the letters pages of *Sin City* books to be essential reading. As to your comments in issue #4 . . .

Don't you think that you're taking DC to task unnecessarily? I mean, they're just protecting their character and their own back. After all, I'm sure you've gotten offers for your characters to appear in different media, right? And you accept or decline the offer based on your "editorial standards," yes?

I'm with you on the *Green Lantern* thing, though. DC will never understand their blunder with that character, nor will Marvel understand theirs with the Web-Slinger. However, I think that DC is allowing Garth Ennis to push their idea of "editorial standards," perhaps trying to follow your groundbreaking work. Maybe not. I don't know. But certainly *Preacher* would not exist at the level it does without your and other creators' pioneering. *Sin City* is the standard that comics creators should aspire to.

All I know about Kyle Baker's story is what I've read in *Comics Buyer's Guide*, but maybe DC yanked the story due to negotiations with the Siegels. Again, I don't know; I'm just guessing. But if I were DC, I sure wouldn't want anything to get in the way of my keeping the first, and also the most recognizable, superhero in the world.

I hate to be wrong, so please correct me if I am.

We're all guessing, pal. DC isn't talking.

But I must comment that "editorial standards" are determined by the publisher, and enforced by, of course, the *editor*. A comic book is in the editorial pipe for months, from proposal to finished art, then to color separations, before it ever reaches the printer. To trash a printed comic—that would take either a complete failure of the entire editorial system, or a whole new concept: "*retroactive* editorial standards." Brother, would that slow down production.

Mikel Bao
Portugalete, Vizcaya, Spain

I read your words about Kyle Baker in *Hell and Back* #4, and I felt so bad. And so angry. Censorship is always so stupid. Somebody who surely can't tell a story with words or pictures takes the work of an exceptionally gifted man (in both things) and withholds it from us. So stupid. Kyle Baker is an author whom I consider very special. His work is always surprising, always completely different from all the others. Great writer, great artist. I hope we can see that story someday.

And about *Hell and Back*, you can bet I can't wait to see how the story of Wallace continues.

Jonathan Miller
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I've never in my life thought about putting a baby in the microwave. However, if I read it in a comic book, I'm pretty sure that it's the very next thing I would do. Thank god for censorship. What would this country be without it? Oh, yeah . . . free.

I shudder to think of it.

Dan Garcia
sincitizen@darkhorsemail.net

Just finished *Hell and Back* #4, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. So far this story has been compelling in a much different way than your previous *Sin City* opuses, and that is very refreshing.

First of all, I'm not going to lie; I am a fan of DC Comics and have been for a long time, though I will not say that I approve of every editorial decision that comes out of that camp. In fact, the situation that you brought to light in the letters pages of *Hell and Back* #4 is one of those instances. I must admit that DC Comics has a tendency to develop gelatinous vertebrae when it comes to challenging the status of one of their iconic characters (i.e., Superman).

I will agree with you that the censoring of a story by anyone is an affront to the First Amendment, and the realization that has to be made is this: it isn't about publishing "questionable material," it's about robbing people of the right to choose what they want to read. It's about the grave injury that is delivered to both the reading public and the artist who painstakingly crafted the work in question.

"Editorial standards" is a statement that, to me, seems to connote fear. If you ask me (and nobody really did, which is the beauty of having freedom of speech), this whole situation has nothing to do with what is published or not published in some comic book. This is about people failing to use their own better judgment and about the fear that is associated with challenging the conventions associated with an iconic character.

Damn "editorial standards"! What is needed here are "reader standards." After all, in a market based on consumer sovereignty it is the buyer who ultimately determines what flies and what doesn't. Folks have got to stop allowing themselves to be force fed, and remember they have a choice that they are free to exercise any time they please.

Thank you for bringing this situation to light. I wish you continued success (like you really need it, Mr. I-got-more-Eisners-than-birds-got-feathers!). Congratulations on *300*. It more than deserved everything it won.

Mark Stewart
sofacomx@hotmail.com

Porsche 356a, '65(?) Mustang, '49 Tucker, '59 Caddy, '53 Caddy, Ferrari F40, '57 Chevy Nomad (Bel Air), and a bunch of '55 Chevy cop cars. I've been paying attention, and I know most of the cars you draw, but Wallace's rocket-ship ride has me stumped. Could you enlighten me?

It was a '51 Buick *LeSabre*, from back when they knew how to make a good-looking car. The ones they're pumping out these days all look like they're made to be easy to swallow. Who are they trying to market to—wusses?

Paul Buxton
paul_f_buxton@hotmail.com

Really just the best issue yet. The way you use black makes your nothin' so much more powerful than most other artists' somethin'.

NEXT ISSUE: A very bad day for supporting characters.

— FM

GALLERY

eduardo **BARRETO**

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